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SUBJECT: FRENCH REORGANIZATION IN RESPONSE TO
CLIMATE CHANGE

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¶1. (SBU) Summary. Under the Sarkozy government France has created a "super-ministry" that merges ecology, energy, transportation, sustainable development and regional planning into a single ministry. The new organization is headed by a Minister of State senior to all other ministers. With an approximate staff of 80,000, the ministry has under its authority six main directorates, a host of specialized high-ranking civil servants, three inter-ministerial delegations, nine scientific organizations, fourteen training centers, and eleven departmental, regional, interdepartmental and interregional bureaus. The Ministry was designed to internalize environmental and other social externalities in policymaking on key energy-intensive sectors. End Summary

Sarkozy's Vision: Ecology Super-Ministry

¶2. (SBU) Throughout his Presidential campaign, Nicolas Sarkozy pledged to put environment at the center of his government, telling voters that archaic economic policymaking structures neglected to take into account environmental impacts. Once elected, Sarkozy gave an environmental face-lift to the French administration by creating the Ministry for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Regional Development (MEDAD). Formally announced in June 2007, MEDAD had authority over energy, transportation, and regional planning, as well as environment and sustainable development. MEDAD underwent reorganization in March 2008 to become the current Ministry of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and Regional Development (MEEDDAT), with a workforce of 78,000 full-time staff.

MEEDDAT: A Transversal Concept

¶3. (SBU) The reorganization process at national and regional levels continues, and the physical merger of various departments will take three more years before the process is finished. This restructuring has elevated MEEDDAT to one of the most important ministries in the GOF, and in principle allows for a holistic approach to growth that takes into account environmental externalities, including climate change.

Key Players

¶4. (SBU) MEEDDAT Minister Jean-Louis Borloo holds the title of State Minister, with a ranking of third most senior official in the government after the

President and the Prime Minister. Four Secretaries of State work under Borloo's supervision: Dominique Bussereau, Secretary of State for Transportation; Nathalie Kosciusko-Morizet (NKM), Secretary of State for Ecology; Hubert Falco, Secretary of State for Regional Development (Aménagement du Territoire); and Christian Blanc, Secretary of State for Development of the Paris area. Other key players include Borloo's head of cabinet Jean-Francois Carenco, Climate negotiators Brice Lalonde, Peter Carl, and Secretary General Didier Lallement.

Crackerjack Climateers

15. (SBU) Lalonde was appointed Ambassador Responsible for Climate Negotiations, serves as a senior advisor for the Environment and Energy Agency, and as a consultant to major companies and local governments in the fields of environment, energy, and development. (Note: Lalonde is also a childhood friend and first cousin of U.S. Senator John Kerry. End note) Danish national and former European Commission Director General for Environment Peter Carl was hired by the GOF to spearhead the EU's Energy and Environment package and push EU climate negotiations.

MEEDDAT On Message

16. (SBU) MEEDDAT clearly has achieved a degree of success in stitching together environmental and

PARIS 00002104 002 OF 002

energy/transport goals. Despite a few high-profile contretemps notably on a GMO bill and on eco-tax proposals that went too far, too fast for the rest of the GOF -- Post generally gets consistent policy messages from different divisions of the sprawling ministry. What Ecology State Secretary Kosciusko-Morizet told us in October largely tracked with what we heard earlier from MEEDDAT's Director General for Energy and Raw Materials. Similarly, an October meeting on the EU's climate and energy package with the Dane Peter Carl was wholly consistent with what we heard from MEEDDAT's head of energy efficiency, and from the Ministry's Secretary General Lallement in a separate meeting. Policy tensions undoubtedly remain, but in a relatively short period of time the Ministry has become remarkably coherent in its messaging.

Priorities and Implications for the United States

17. (SBU) The GOF is operating in two largely-consistent spaces on climate change and environment issues. Domestically the focus is on the "Grenelle" bills, the robust French environmental legislation that will ultimately lead to establishment of environmental enforcement provisions, while internationally the focus is on the EU Climate and Energy package, which will feed into the UNFCCC process. Other priorities include eco-tax reform, pursuing a carbon/border adjustment mechanism as part of the EU's Emissions Trading System, nuclear power as a means of fighting climate change, and various issues related to agricultural policy.

18. (SBU) There are some ecological issues outside of MEEDDAT's purview. From a sustainability standpoint, biodiversity and compliance concerns on fisheries fall traditionally to the Agriculture Ministry. Energy security responsibilities reside primarily in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. An

MFA reorganization, scheduled to take effect in February, 2009, will result in the creation of a "globalization" bureau combining global/multilateral issues, environment, energy and development into a single directorate. Current Economic Affairs Director and FASS Christian Masset is slated to head up the new directorate.

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